



This is an Accepted Manuscript version of the article published originally by The University of Chicago Press, accepted for publication in the journal:

*Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*

This version may differ from the original in pagination and typographic details. When using, please cite the original.

AUTHOR(S)

Pinelo, A. L.

TITLE

Femi(ni)cide: A Cartography

YEAR

2024

DOI

10.1086/728061

CITATION

Pinelo, A. L. (2024). Femi(ni)cide: A Cartography. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 49(3), 659–686. <https://doi.org/10.1086/728061>

VERSION

Accepted Manuscript

LICENSE

This version is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0)

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.

## **Femi(ni)cide: A Cartography**

This paper is an introductory cartography of the terms *femicide* and *feminicide* along with their transformation into a legal category. Both terms, which I merge here using the formulation “femi(ni)cide,” refer to the feminist concept that identifies certain killings of women, those that occur within the patriarchal apparatus or power hierarchies of sex/gender. While key differences in the uses of the two terms will be discussed later, I use “femi(ni)cide” to refer to this shared fundamental definition, which, crucially, is not simply the “female” version of “homicide.”

This paper is part of a larger project on femi(ni)cide in Europe, particularly Germany. I have found that when I talk about my research and activism to non-specialists in Europe, the most prevalent reaction is to be puzzled when I clarify that my focus is Germany, and to express the assumption that femi(ni)cide mainly occurs in Spain or Italy, or among migrants. This common response seems to exhibit a view still prevalent in the European imaginary: that femi(ni)cide, if found in countries of the global North, is mainly due to migration. I believe that the fact that for many years the problem of femi(ni)cide was generally framed as such only outside of Europe, and treated as a development cooperation issue, is partially responsible for this presupposition. This framing can be seen in the fact that the number of theses produced in Europe about femi(ni)cide in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) outnumbered those about femi(ni)cide in Europe itself for a number of years. It is also evident, for example, in the various events held by the European Union–Latin America and Caribbean Foundation to fight against femi(ni)cide in LAC, and the activities founded by the “Spotlight Initiative” to fight violence against women (VAW), including femi(ni)cide, in the

global South. Such framing has contributed to “cultural stereotyping” (Radford and Russell 1992, 9) or what is sometimes called “culturalization of violence”: a mechanism used by Western countries in which cultural elements in non-Western countries are magnified to explain violence (Montoya and Rolandsen Agustín 2013, 539).

But the discussion on femi(ni)cide is changing: now the focus is turning to Europe as well. Still, I argue, hegemonic colonial dynamics continue to permeate certain contexts of the debate in the global North. The concept of femi(ni)cide has been widely used for several decades in LAC and the literature is vast, but between 2018 and 2020, as I attended multiple events in various European countries and taught classes in Finland and the US, I discovered that in these academic and activist settings certain basic questions continued to recur: Are “femicide” and “feminicide” the same? What does femi(ni)cide stand for? Is femi(ni)cide a term created in the global South? Is femi(ni)cide a phenomenon that occurs only in the global South? Does femi(ni)cide refer to intimate relationships alone? This cartography is meant to help answer these questions. It is a mapping of the concepts/categories and their use, not a mapping of the global phenomenon or of acts of femi(ni)cide.<sup>1</sup>

My analysis draws on two main theoretical frameworks: new feminist materialism (NFM);<sup>2</sup> and epistemologies of the South (EoS),<sup>3</sup> particularly decolonial theory. I am using

---

<sup>1</sup> For other mappings see, e.g., Fregoso and Bejarano (2010); Spinelli (2011); Laporta (2015a); Grzyb, Naudi, and Marcuello-Servós (2018).

<sup>2</sup> Since the mid-1990s, feminist philosophers have invented a new form of materialism, whose focus is to address and account for the materiality that was cut by the linguistics of poststructuralism.

<sup>3</sup> EoS refer to knowledges that are “anchored in the experiences of resistance of all those social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression, and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, *and* patriarchy”

both frameworks to try to contest entrenched attitudes—modern, Western, patriarchal, and colonial—towards the study of femi(ni)cide (García-Del Moral 2018). I follow Rosi Braidotti's (2002, 2) understanding of cartography as “a theoretically based and politically informed reading of the present” intended here to map how the concept of femi(ni)cide itself is used and treated. This cartography is not the “only” or “true” story of femi(ni)cide (Adichie 2009)—it is one of many possibilities, and is meant to serve as an invitation to consider other narratives that take seriously the knowledge production of a wide variety of regions (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010), rather than colonizing debates and experiences.

In what follows, I introduce key methodological decisions, then I address the initial emergence of the feminist concept of “femicide” in the United States of America (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). After this, I move to LAC,<sup>4</sup> where the concept found fertile ground, so that today one cannot speak of femi(ni)cide without considering the contributions by feminist theorists, activists, and politicians from that region. Finally, I tackle Europe, where discussions of femi(ni)cide are gaining momentum, and where I currently observe a North-South power dynamic in the production of knowledge.

### **New feminist materialism and epistemologies of the South**

Since one decides which authors to engage with based on personal, disciplinary, political, and cultural experiences, I recur to a particular set of authors and texts; I am aware, however, of the vast literature being produced about femi(ni)cide worldwide. When I speak of

---

[emphasis mine] (Santos 2018, 1). In my use, the term covers epistemologies such as postcolonialism, decoloniality, and anticoloniality.

<sup>4</sup> I speak of “Latin America” but I am sensitive to critiques of the term: see Mignolo (2005).

femi(ni)cide as a “concept” or “term,” I am addressing different discussions in the socio-anthropological and philosophical realms;<sup>5</sup> I use “category” to refer to the legal sphere.

Following NFM, I avoid Master narratives, phallic Mothers or Oedipal structures, aiming rather to weave together several generations of theorists and their arguments and to enable generative conversations. Hegelian Master-slave narratives are common in the second wave of feminism; these narratives mean the confirmation by negation or subsumption of the philosophical Masters. Phallic Mothers refers to this same dialecticism, which seeks to embrace the competition of theories in order to have the right or power (*phallus*) of knowledge. Oedipal structures are also a dialecticism, one impelled by competition and the sense of rivalry (van der Tuin 2009, 20-22).

In NFM terms, Karen Barad understands “phenomena” as being produced in “intra-actions.” Intra-actions mean that phenomena are not constituted by ontologically separable “components” but rather co-emerge relationally. This notion is differentiated from that of “interaction,” which presumes ontologically prior substances with determined properties or identities (Barad 2012; Jagger 2015). I work with intra-actions to explore how different “components” relate in the configuration of femi(ni)cide; this understanding allows me for example, to account for how activism, academic theory, law, and politics are deeply entangled and influence each other in complex ways in different locations. Though the narrative may at times appear linear and the locations static, this cartography lets us perceive a fluid encounter between multiple temporalities and complex social and political configurations of matter(ing) (Barad 2007, 151-52). Even when at times I focus on specific

---

<sup>5</sup> I use “concept” in the sense understood by Deleuze and Guattari (1994).

areas—for example, law or academia—I invite readers to keep in mind that all these areas are ontologically inseparable, with a relationship of co-determination.

Decolonial theory, which I identify as part of EoS, understands “coloniality” to refer to a complex socio-cultural process derived from colonialism that embeds colonial structures into the collective imaginary and institutions of power (Quijano 1992). Quijano (2000) used the concept of “coloniality of power” to refer to the global pattern of power “that was based on the idea of ‘race’ and on the ‘racial’ social classification of world population” (218), and which laid the ground for the control of working people. Coloniality affects a variety of other areas such as knowledge, in the sense that only specific knowledge is considered valid (Quijano 1992); gender, in the sense that, as some argue, not only race but also gender contributed to the establishment of such hierarchies (Lugones 2010); and being, in the sense of its effects on the lived experience and language of people who were not considered (full) humans (Maldonado-Torres 2007). “Internal colonialism” occurs within nation-states and at the subjective level (Rivera Cusicanqui 2015; González Casanova 1965).

### **Emergence: Naming what has no name**

It is not always true that if something does not have a name it does not exist. It has been said, for instance, that femi(ni)cide is a new word for an old barbarism (Radford and Russell 1992, 25). But the fact that women throughout history have been killed by men because they are women does not imply that those killings were always considered a form of brutality. In this sense, labelling these crimes as femi(ni)cide is important to make them visible and try to comprehend the problem, while conceptualizing them as femi(ni)cide is a political activity

that enables the creation of possible futures without those crimes. In this section I will address the emergence of the concept of femi(ni)cide and its differentiation from homicide.

The feminist origins of the term “femicide” trace back to Diana Russell’s use of it in the International Tribunal on Crimes against Women (Brussels, 1976) although without defining it; Russell (2011) states it was understood to refer to a “hate killing of females perpetrated by males.”<sup>6</sup> It was only in 1990 that Russell and Jane Caputi defined femicide as “the ultimate end of a continuum of terror” (1990, 35) in which women are murdered “by men motivated by hatred, contempt, pleasure, or a sense of ownership of women” (34). Later, in the anthology *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, Jill Radford framed femicide as a form of sexual violence and defined it as “the misogynous killing of women by men” (Radford 1992, 3) and Russell (1992, xiv) as “the killing of women by men *because* they are women” (emphasis in the original).

In that anthology, Radford argued that femicide is a global phenomenon and warned about the “cultural stereotyping” of it. She also recognized that although most femicides occur in domestic settings, there are several types of femicide (which are not discrete: a single case can overlap different types) such as serial, lesbophobic, prostituted women, intimate partner, mass, and racist femicide (Radford 1992, 7; Russell 2001, 18).<sup>7</sup> Russell slightly changed some of her definitions over the years; however, the political and feminist use of femicide has its origins in the formulations made by her, alone and together with other researchers.

---

<sup>6</sup> For earlier historic uses of the word “femicide” and how Russell came up with the feminist formulation of the term, see Russell (2001, 2011).

<sup>7</sup> For a critique of the typologies of femicide, see García-Del Moral (2018).

Femicide is meant to be applied to certain killings of women, those which occur within the patriarchal apparatus or hierarchies of power, and not to simply differentiate killings by the victims' sex (Russell 2001, 15). The political relevance of this concept is that it unveils a modernist structure that otherwise ends up concealed under the use of "homicide": a hegemonic system in which the universal is thought of as neutral and totalizing but in fact obscures a hierarchical power structure in which the subjects "women" are placed on the side of the subordinated.

Feminists have long emphasized the role of experience in theory formation; bell hooks (1994, 70), for example, argues that feminist theory "emerges from the concrete, from efforts to make sense of everyday life experiences," and "from efforts to intervene critically in [our] life and the lives of others." In this understanding, theory is bound to the materiality of existence and not the product of an abstract reality. I see this basic relationality enacted in the emergence of the concept of femicide, given that Russell and Radford worked in both academia and civil activism: activism, academia and lived experience—or more broadly, of theory and praxis—are co-constituting, intra-acting to generate, the concept.

With the emergence of the concept of femicide, the relationship between socio-cultural realms, the law and the State was established. This concept revealed the lack of statistics to help to assess the scope of the phenomenon, the fact that prohibiting abortion puts women's lives at risk, and the fact that the complex relationship between racism, sexism, colonialism, and heterosexism put different women at risk in differentiated ways. It is interesting that even though femicide was born as a concept in the contexts of the US and the UK, it has not been codified as a criminal offense in either country or even used as a legal category for policy making, although this legal aspect was not part of the discussion in the early years of femicide research and activism. In the US federal law known as the Violence

Against Women Act, which was last reauthorized in 2019 and extended to cover transgender individuals, there is no language concerning femicide or violence ending in murder. The killing of a woman because of her sex/gender is not legally differentiated from homicide or manslaughter. The same is true in the UK: no specific offense exists under the name gender violence, femicide, or anything similar, although some forms of gender violence are considered crimes.

### **Metamorphosis: A concept in motion in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Radford identified femicide as a global issue—in that sense it is universal.<sup>8</sup> However, it presents itself in different forms depending on its location (both geographical/political and temporal/genealogical). In this section, I will tackle the active translation and reconceptualization of femicide in the context of LAC. In doing so I aim to address the often-asked question: Are “femicide” and “feminicide” the same? In answering this question, I challenge the idea that the global South passively takes knowledge from the global North instead of producing valid knowledge and thinking *with* the North (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010; Santos 2016).<sup>9</sup> In the second part of this section, I focus on the transposition of

---

<sup>8</sup> In NFM, “universality” means “a qualitative leap, from individual experience to collective practice” (Braidotti 2011, 115). It differs from “‘false universality’—i.e., the idea that there can be a neutral universal subject” which “transcends spatio-temporal and geo-political specificities” (Luján Pinelo 2018, 59).

<sup>9</sup> Santos (2016, 19) argues “that after five centuries of ‘teaching’ the world, the global North seems to have lost the capacity to learn from the experiences of the world (...) it looks as if colonialism has disabled the global North from learning in non-colonial terms, that is, in terms that allow for the existence of histories other than the ‘universal’ history of the West.”

femi(ni)cide into a legal category, a transition that has broadened the discussion and opened new challenges.

### **The concept**

In 1993 a series of murders of girls and women began to occur in the northern Mexican city Ciudad Juárez.<sup>10</sup> The systematic nature of these killings mobilized the family members of the victims as well as activists and NGOs, who managed to call international attention to the crimes (Schmidt Camacho 2004; Monárrez 2009; Wright 2011). In order to make sense of this ongoing scenario, the mothers of some victims in Ciudad Juárez asked the Mexican feminist and anthropologist Marcela Lagarde to help them understand why men kill women; to this end, Lagarde took Radford and Russell's work as a framework and introduced their concept of "femicide" into the Mexican arena in 1994, but transformed it into a different form (Lagarde 1998).

The term Lagarde introduced into Spanish was "*feminicidio*" (feminicide) rather than "*femicidio*" (femicide): according to her, in Spanish the latter merely implied the feminine equivalent of homicide, potentially referring to any killing of women (for example, if women are murdered as a result of a criminal exploding a bomb in a bank, "*homicidio*" might refer

---

<sup>10</sup> The journalist Margarita Cordero has reported that the term "*feminicidio*" (feminicide) was first used in LAC in the mid-'80s, and that it referred to the killing of women but was not further theorized. It is not clear where this formulation came from, and/or if it has links to Russell's first use of the word in 1976. Later, in the 2000s, "*feminicidio*" in the Dominican Republic came to be understood as having the same meaning as "femicide," following Russell's theorizations. For both of these terminological references, see Pola (2008), in which the authors use "femi(ni)cide" to merge the Dominican use of "feminicide" (before Russell's theorizations) with the use of "femicide" (after Russell's theorizations).

to the men killed and “*femicidio*” to the women). For Lagarde, *femicidio* did a better job of emphasizing the social construction and sex/gender-based power dynamics embedded in these crimes, a connotation that is in play in Russell and Radford’s English term.<sup>11</sup>

Given the context in which Lagarde was theorizing femicide she argued that it needed to be framed in the language of human rights. Lagarde framed femicide considering international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979) and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará)—in particular, “the right to be free of violence in both the public and the private spheres” (OAS 1994, article 3). In her theorization she stressed the *tolerance of society* towards these crimes and the *responsibility of the state* to work on guaranteeing the lives of its citizens and the enforcement of justice (Lagarde 2008, 216-17). In Lagarde’s own words, femicide is an

extreme form of gender based violence and human rights violation, whether occurring in public or private life, through misogynist practices – abuses, physical, sexual, educational, professional, economic, patrimonial violence, violence perpetrated within the family, the community or the state institutions – which lead to impunity and put women in a condition of risk and lack of protection until their murder or attempt, or other kinds of death of women and children, such as suicides, accidents, sufferings or deaths caused by lack of

---

<sup>11</sup> Lagarde does not claim to have coined “femicide,” as mistakenly assumed by Russell, but “femicide.” Cf. Russell (2011).

personal security and interest from institutions, and absence of inclusion on development and democracy. (Quoted in Spinelli 2011, 8)

Lagarde has also described femicide as “genocide against women,” “crimes against humanity” or “State crime.” The introduction of the State into the equation has been particularly controversial. Some authors, such as Russell (though mostly agreeing with Lagarde’s theorizations), argue that adding the State into the definition of femicide is dangerous because if a case of femicide receives “legal justice,” this might imply that it stops being a femicide (Russell 2011). I will come back to this point later.

Another relevant contribution to the understanding of the concept of femicide comes from the Mexican feminist scholar Julia Monárrez. According to her:

Femicide is the assassination of a woman committed by a man, where one finds all of the elements of the relationship of inequality between the sexes: the gender superiority of man over the gender subordination of woman, misogyny, control, and sexism. Not only is a woman’s biological body assassinated, but what the cultural construction of her body has signified is also assassinated, with the passivity and tolerance of a masculinized state. (Monárrez 2010b, 69)

Like Lagarde, Monárrez considers that femicides exist because there are societal, legal, political, and economic power structures of patriarchal nature that tolerate them. Monárrez was the first researcher to develop a systematic geo-referential database on femicide

intended to help identify areas of risk and ultimately prevent the crime. (Monárrez 2010a).<sup>12</sup> Monárrez advocates for dynamic classification of types of femicide, establishing their mechanisms and characteristics in order to build strategies based on this. Her database, directly or indirectly, has inspired many other related projects not only in LAC but also, as I will mention later, in Europe.

The Argentinean feminist anthropologist Rita Laura Segato was invited as an international expert to understand what was happening in Ciudad Juárez. This experience, her previous research with rapists in prison, and her acquaintance with activists and theorists such as Lagarde and Monárrez led her to develop a theory related to these killings. She distinguished two types of femicide: (1) femicides in which the context of the crime can be personalized—when, for example, an interpersonal relationship can be established between victim and perpetrator, as in intimate femicide, or when one can identify motives linked to a single perpetrator (e.g., serial killers)—and (2) femicides of impersonal nature, meaning that they cannot be reduced to the interpersonal relations between individuals (e.g., the murder of women as a tactic of war). The latter she named “*femi-geno-cidio*” (femi-genocide). Segato has been a strong advocate for penalizing these acts, particularly at an international level. She insists that feminists and/or femicide theorists should come to a basic agreement about a definition of femi(ni)cide that can be applied as a legal category: many lawyers complain that the lack of consensus on a single definition makes it difficult to penalize this crime (Segato 2011a).

---

<sup>12</sup> Monárrez (2009, 90–91) acknowledges that her database was based on the list of cases provided by Esther Chávez Cano, whose primary source of information was newspaper articles, but she also included information from interviews.

The US-based Latin Americanist scholars Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano introduced “femicide” into English as a way of echoing the extensive theoretical production and debates taking place amongst theorists and activists in LAC, thus challenging the unidirectionality and North-South hierarchy in the production of knowledge. In their own words:

Our cartography of femicide proposes a reconfiguration of knowledge hierarchies that contests the notion of seamless translation – that is, the idea that Latin American feminists have merely appropriated theories from feminists of the global North without modifying or advancing meanings in response to local contexts. Rather, in the process of borrowing the concept and adapting it to local circumstances, we have generated new understandings about femicide. (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010, 5)

By bringing “femicide” into the English-speaking context, they traverse the common belief that “femicide” is the correct word in English and “feminicide” in Spanish. For these authors—in tune with Monárrez—“femicide” highlights the social construction of gender norms that build the “feminine” subject (see Luján Pinelo 2018). Furthermore, in their definition of femicide, they stress the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race and class: “[F]emicide is systematic violence rooted in social, political, economic, and cultural inequalities” (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010, 5). In their definition of femicide they also include the State and a critical human rights approach.

The sociologist Paulina García-Del Moral criticizes that “femicide” fails to account for structural/colonial violence: given its radical feminist roots rely heavily on additive

intersectionality, posing gender as the central component (2018, 949). She finds in the theoretical elaborations of “femicide” a shift towards intersectionality and structural analysis although she recognizes that the role of coloniality is not widely elaborated. Therefore, she proposes working with a “feminist decolonial intersectional framework,” which combines approaches based in the concept of *femicide* and anticolonial perspectives. In her own words: “While *femicidio* and femicide move toward an intersectional analysis that highlights the complicity of the state in gender violence, the anticolonial approach theorizes the relationships between colonial dynamics and the killing of women” (930).

So, returning to the question: Are femicide and femicide the same? I argue that, strictly speaking, both terms refer to the same phenomenon of killing of women, but they emphasize different shades of meaning, as the discussion above has shown. Some feminists in LAC started to use the framing “femicide/femicide” to avoid Oedipal structures—as an example of such structures, Russell recounts that in 2008 she attended a conference in El Salvador on *femicidio*, later realizing that users of the term *femicidio* had not been invited (Russell 2011). On the other hand, the use of “femicide” has been neglected in certain settings under the argument that it is the Spanish version of “femicide” or that it only refers to contexts in which there is State impunity. The choice of terms remains a contested arena, and this contestation is being reproduced in Europe, as I will address later.

I proposed using the form “femi(ni)cide” (Luján Pinelo 2018, 45) partly because it has more “economy of language” or “practicality” than the more unwieldy “femicide/femicide.” Above all, I find it important to unite the two terms because, following NFM, I support the cause of enabling conversations among different authors, and avoiding conceptual hierarchies or the appearance of supporting one side in a power war,

which could block communication, as Russell's anecdote illustrates.<sup>13</sup> My formulation "femi(ni)cide" should be understood as the merging of femicide, as developed by Russell, and feminicide, as reconceptualized by Lagarde and others. In recent years, increasing numbers of academics and activists have begun using this formulation, and I think it is important to explain my own thinking and motives in using it.

As stated earlier, the mobilization around the feminicides of Ciudad Juárez managed to call international attention to these "systemic sexual feminicides."<sup>14</sup> However, this situation prompted people to erroneously assume for many years that femi(ni)cides mainly occur in Mexico or other LAC countries. As Silvia Chejter states:

Although from the point of view of the emergence and evolution of the concept of femicide in Latin America, the crimes of Ciudad Juárez were a trigger for actions throughout Latin America, and for the incorporation of the concept in social discourse, sexist and gender crimes are not the exclusive heritage of that country or of our continent; there is also abundant documentation referring to other countries. (2008, 6)

I argue that the situated nature of Lagarde's theorizations does not discredit their potential contribution for other locations—although debates must, of course, always be revised

---

<sup>13</sup> Russell (2011), for example, has pointed out that she became "distressed when the term feminicide is used rather than femicide."

<sup>14</sup> Classification by Monárrez (2009, 95–96), which consists of sexual crimes with systematic methods and a high level of impunity.

according to the needs of different contexts, as many countries in LAC have done with the term “femicide.” There are arguments claiming that “femicide” and “*feminicidio*” are simply forms more natural to English and Spanish, respectively, but as I have discussed here, the two terms encode different nuances and shades of meaning for different thinkers. Both “femicide” and “feminicide” exist in English, and both “*femicidio*” and “*feminicidio*” exist in Spanish, there is not only one correct term.

To disregard Lagarde’s theorization of feminicide due to her introduction of the State does not account for the full argument behind it. Lagarde does not mean that impunity—the lack of investigation and punishment—is the only factor at play in the concept of feminicide: there is a broader spectrum of ways in which the State is accountable, when there is a lack of conditions (e.g., prevention, education, awareness, and research) that might prevent these crimes in the first place. Furthermore, another key element in her definition is social responsibility: inasmuch as society is tolerant towards these crimes and there are no actions against them, we, as a society, are complicit. In her definition, Lagarde is pointing out that even when there is an individual who is responsible for a crime, that individual is immersed in a specific social context; responsibility is shared by individuals, society, and the State.

Although I have focused on conceptual aspects of femi(ni)cide in LAC, the reconceptualization of “femicide” was not an isolated conversation, but rather one marked by a strong relationship between academia and activism (Wright 2011), which in turn generated another string of conversation: the judiciary.

## **Becoming a legal category**

As of today, seventeen countries in LAC have criminalized femi(ni)cide, listed in the table below (see further Laporta 2015b).<sup>15</sup> I use Elena Laporta's (2015b) differentiation of types of laws: unidirectional laws, meaning those that focus only on the criminal aspect and include the category only in the penal code; and mainstreaming laws, considering elements of prevention, assistance, and reparation beyond the criminal sphere. A mainstreaming approach stresses that criminalizing femi(ni)cide per se is not the solution to these crimes, but rather one part of a holistic strategy that covers many socio-cultural aspects. In all cases, countries that have recognized femi(ni)cide as a criminal offense differentiate its treatment from that of homicides and establish specific provisions on penalties (Toledo Vásquez 2012; Deus and Gonzalez 2018). The table also records the wording these laws use, and the type of femi(ni)cide they criminalize: some specifically deal only with intimate femi(ni)cide, while others employ what I call a broad definition, meaning that they consider other types of femi(ni)cide as well, including killings committed outside the context of an intimate partner relationship.

---

<sup>15</sup> I do not include Argentina in this list because their criminal code does not explicitly use the category femi(ni)cide; however, Argentina passed a reform concerning aggravated homicide and gender-based crimes against women in 2012. The Dominican Republic passed a law on femicide in 2014 but it was declared unconstitutional in 2015.

Year	Country	Wording	Type of femi(ni)cide	Type of law	Law	Criminal code
2007	Costa Rica	Femicide	Intimate femicide	Unidirectional law	Law N° 8589	No
2008	Guatemala	Femicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Decree 22-2008	No
2010	Chile	Femicide	Broad definition	Unidirectional law	Law 20480/Law21212	Art. 390 §1 bis
2011	Peru	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law N° 29819	Art. 108 B
2012	Mexico	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Ley de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre	Art. 325
2012	El Salvador	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Decree N° 520	No
2012	Nicaragua	Femicide	Intimate femicide	Mainstreaming law	Law No. 779	No
2013	Bolivia	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law 348	Art. 252 Bis
2013	Honduras	Femicide	Broad definition	Unidirectional law	Decree 23-2013	Art. 208
2013	Panama	Femicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law N° 82	No
2014	Ecuador	Femicide	Broad definition	Unidirectional law	Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code 2014	Art. 141
2014	Venezuela	Femicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Ley de Reforma de la Ley Orgánica Sobre el	No
2015	Brazil	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law 13.104/2015	Art.121
2015	Colombia	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law 1761 from 2015	Art. 104 A
2016	Paraguay	Feminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law N° 5777	No
2017	Uruguay	Femicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	Law N° 19.580	Art. 312.8
2021	Puerto Rico	Feminicidio Transfeminicide	Broad definition	Mainstreaming law	PS 130, law 40	Art. 93(f)

*Table 1. Femi(ni)cide category, elaborated by the author.*

Interestingly, the two laws that limit themselves to criminalizing intimate femi(ni)cide call it “femicide,” and all unidirectional laws use that same term; however, a comprehensive analysis of such laws would be needed before jumping to conclusions regarding the connection between the wording and the law. Criminalization can be read in at least two ways: first, that it in fact perpetuates the patriarchal hierarchization of sex/gender and responds to a paternal and protective perspective towards women as subjects; or, second, that the feminist discourse is working “from within” the system and using the tools available to make visible and penalize that system’s assignment of a particular limited value to the lives of women. I am more inclined to the second interpretation.

It is worth noting that the major references used in these laws on femi(ni)cide are CEDAW and the Convention of Belém do Pará. The latter is a legally binding instrument from 1994 that establishes, among other things, that the countries subscribing to it must protect the right of women to a life free from violence in public and private spheres. Femi(ni)cide as such is not explicitly named in the Convention, but its definition of VAW includes any violence that causes the death of women in either the public or private sphere (OAS 1994, article 1); this aspect has served as a platform for activism and political mobilization against femi(ni)cide.

In *González et al. v. Mexico* (2009) the Inter-American Court sentenced the Mexican State for violations of human rights such as the rights to life, personal integrity, and personal liberty.<sup>16</sup> This important sentence was the first one handed down by an international body concerning individual “femicides” and their relation to a national government. The case includes the opinions, inter alia, of Lagarde and Monárrez and uses the term “feminicidio” in the Spanish version and “femicide” in the English version; it recognizes femicide as the “gender-based murder of women,” and then goes on to use this latter phrase instead of “femicide” (para 143). The sentence itself uses neither “femicide” nor “gender-based murder of women.” This ruling helped to put the concept of femi(ni)cide in international circulation and opened discussions about the possibility of codifying femi(ni)cide at an international level (Messuti 2015).

Segato analyzes the United Nations report by the lawyer Patsilí Toledo Vásquez on the viability of penalizing femi(ni)cide at national level in LAC and internationally. Toledo Vásquez (2009, 93) argues that, in LAC, there is a lack of precision in criminal categories

---

<sup>16</sup> *González et al. ('Cotton Field') v. Mexico*, Inter-A. Ct. H. R. (16 November 2009).

due to the transposition of social science concepts to the legal sphere; she criticizes these concepts as not complying with legal standards. In response, Segato argues:

If the law cannot take into account the complexities and transformations of human actions, nor make use of the contributions of anthropology and sociology in order to formulate rights and guarantee protection, the law should give up its normative endeavor and reinvent itself as a system [...] If the technical vocabulary and categorical purism that prevail in legal circles destroy the possibility of grasping history's dynamism and the consequent mutability of the practices that cause suffering, then the law should declare itself unable to talk about what matters to people, what interests us. One can't argue the impossibility of creating something based on the fact that it has not yet been created; the justification of uncreatability by non-existence is circular and fallacious reasoning. (Segato 2011b, 260)

I would agree that Toledo Vásquez has a point when she states that one needs to consider the transformations of concepts into legal categories. However, I also agree with Segato's assessment: the law needs to think beyond its own borders, otherwise it will fail to address the realities that demand its actions. What I see in these arguments is the need to traverse the idea that there are two independent disciplines that might at times interact; in fact, this situation shows the need to treat disciplines as already relating to each other, as "intra-acting," and to establish dialogues that cut across disciplinary boundaries. Feminist legal scholars have already highlighted some limitations of the law (broadly understood) and

questioned how other non-legal knowledges are downplayed in the legal discipline (see, e.g., Smart 1989).

Two assisting documents have been issued by UN in LAC. One to investigate femi(ni)cides (*Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women [femicide/feminicide]*, 2014) and a model law proposal (*Analysis of Femicide/Feminicide Legislation in Latin America and the Caribbean and a Proposal for a Model Law*, 2018). An analysis of these documents is needed but go beyond the scope of this paper.

### **A leap: A concept in motion in Europe**

Unlike in LAC, it is only relatively recently that discussion and research using the term femi(ni)cide have started to focus on Europe (see e.g., Weil 2018). I consider this activity to be largely prompted by the activism of women and feminists and the implementation of the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). In this section, I will review how the concept and category of femi(ni)cide are being taken up in Europe by academia, activism, and the law. I will also observe the role of LAC theoretical production in these discussions.

## **European level**

In 2005, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)<sup>17</sup> recommended cooperation with the Mexican Congress, to explore how “femicide,” understood to be the killing of women because they are women and to take different forms, “may usefully be applied in the European context, including its possible introduction into European criminal law” (para 10); the report is very positive about the latter. In a subsequent report, PACE (2008) used “femicide” with “gynocide” interchangeably and followed the same definition as in 2005. The new report invited European national states “to consider the inclusion in criminal legislation of aggravating circumstances where female victims have suffered violence or been killed because of their gender” (para-A, 18) and suggested organizing an observatory and documenting VAW, including femicides, in Europe (para-C, 26). It also recommended inviting Mexico to join the meeting to draft what would become the Istanbul Convention (para-C, 17). These reports illustrate that the leap to Europe was influenced by the situation in Mexico. It is interesting to note that the term used was “femicide,” although the used definition is the one usually attributed to “femicide,” but framed as a human rights issue. PACE is aware that the problem of femi(ni)cide exists in Europe and acknowledges it as a complex phenomenon, not limited to intimate femi(ni)cide. PACE also clearly recognizes that the criminalization of these acts should be part of a more comprehensive strategy to fight all forms of VAW and acknowledges the expertise of countries in LAC in

---

<sup>17</sup> PACE is a statutory body of the Council of Europe, it does not have the power to create laws but provides a forum for examination and debate of current issues, elaborating recommendations, resolutions, and opinions. See <https://pace.coe.int/en/pages/powers>.

this issue. It is not clear what the conclusions of national states regarding PACE's recommendations were.

In 2011, the Istanbul Convention (IC) was launched, a legally binding instrument that obligates governments of signatory countries to adopt concrete and comprehensive plans to combat, protect women against, and ultimately eliminate *all forms of gender-based violence*. The subject of femi(ni)cide, or any explicit language concerning death, is not included in the convention, unlike in the Convention of Belém do Pará. At the time of the IC's drafting and adoption, the literature on femi(ni)cide was already vast and, as we have just seen, PACE had already presented recommendations. Why, then, did the IC end up not mentioning femi(ni)cide? What occurred during its drafting? The Explanatory Report of the IC (2011, paras 16 and 23) claims to take a strong political stand against *all forms of violence* and mentions that during the preparation of the IC at least two reports on "femicide" were taken into consideration: Recommendation 1861/2009 on Femicides, and Resolution 1654/2009 on Femicides.

I do not consider this omission to have been either a mere oversight or a purely deliberate act; rather, I think it belongs to a deep structure of colonial thought (Quijano 1992; Santos 2018). For example, in Articles 32 to 42 the IC specifically lists certain types of offenses, none of which include the language of femi(ni)cide, but which do invoke forms of "culturalized violence"—for example, forced marriage, honor crimes, and female genital mutilation—mostly associated with non-Western/non-Christian cultures. In response to this, Celeste Montoya and Lise Rolandsen Agustín (2013, 539) observe: "In Europe, femicides resulting from domestic violence are more prevalent than honor killings; yet, the outrage for honor killings is much greater. There are specific laws being adopted for these 'cultural' femicides, but those occurring in other 'white European' domestic situations are usually

handled under gender neutral laws on homicide.” In this regard, Johanna Niemi and Amalia Verdu Sanmartin (2020, 90) add that other motivations more common than “honor” are not mentioned in the IC, such as jealousy, provocation, substance abuse, and self-defense.

One can argue that femi(ni)cide is implicitly included in the definition of VAW whether or not it is explicitly mentioned. Others insist that VAW resulting in death “happens in Europe and not stating it is a form of hiding it” (Daza Bonachela 2017, 74). Indeed, the German Senate of Hamburg claims it has no liability to address femi(ni)cide as such with the argument that its work is based on the “definitions of gender-based violence fixed there [IC].”<sup>18</sup> Despite this, I see a resemblance between both conventions (Belém do Pará and the IC) in one sense: in both cases femi(ni)cide does not appear as a concept or category, but the conventions have served as a platform for activism and political agendas demanding the recognition of femi(ni)cide as a problem, and in some cases this has prompted discussion of criminalizing femi(ni)cide at the national level.

For example, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) assists European Union members in meeting the requirements of the IC, which has involved working on creating common indicators to measure VAW. EIGE includes “femicide” in their collection of data on diverse forms of VAW, and on their website they differentiate between “femicide” and “feminicide,” suggesting that the latter describes situations in which there is insufficient response from the State. EIGE gives two definitions of femicide: a general definition which covers different types of femicides, and a second definition for statistical purposes which encompasses “the killing of a woman by an intimate partner and death of a woman as a result

---

<sup>18</sup> Hamburgische Bürgerschaft, Drucksache 21/14972 (2018).

of a practice that is harmful to women.”<sup>19</sup> EIGE’s conceptual distinction is important, since this institution has a notable impact on European Union policies. There is a danger of promoting the false impression that in countries of the European Union there is sufficient State response to VAW and reinforcing the idea that “femicide” exists only in countries of the global South.

Following their definition for statistical purposes, EIGE (2017) developed indicators for data collection on “femicide” in the European Union: “Women victims of intimate femicide aged 18 and over committed by an intimate partner, as a share of women victims of homicide aged 18 and over” (11). Their use of “femicide” to mean “intimate femicide” could contribute to the mistaken idea that femi(ni)cides are exclusively crimes in the context of intimate partner relationships. A few years later EIGE (2021) introduced the framing “intimate partner femicide” and used it interchangeably with “femicide”; however, in the recommendations on data collection to member States EIGE does not recommend that they use the more specific term “intimate partner femicide” (15). The 2017 report states that since no European Union country has legislation on femicide, there is no available data; however, they provide an indirect study focusing on the most commonly available data in most European countries: intentional homicides. I argue that this lack of data on femi(ni)cide shows deficiencies in the State’s response to VAW, which gives sufficient grounds to justify laying a degree of responsibility upon these States. The indirect argument that “femicide” (according to EIGE’s definition) does not occur in Europe is thus called into question.

If States do not comply with the responsibility to address social problems, it is actors such as activists and researchers that may start changing the situation. For example, in 2013

---

<sup>19</sup> See <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1128>.

the European research initiative “Femicide Across Europe” was launched by several researchers. The initiative aimed to create a European network to advance research, agree on femi(ni)cide definitions, to review policies and offer guidelines for national states.<sup>20</sup> One of the outcomes of this initiative was the establishment of the European Observatory on Femicide in 2018, which aims to document “femicide” Europewide. Given the ambitious project of this group and the influence they may have, it is important to analyze their use of the concept of femi(ni)cide. In a journal publication, members of this initiative Consuelo Corradi, Chaime Marcuello-Servós, Santiago Boira, and Shalva Weil (2016) offer an overview of the “evolution” of the English concept of “femicide,” distinguishing between what they identify as the feminist, the sociological, the criminological, the human rights and the decolonial approaches. They differentiate it from “feminicide,” which they understand to be a translation and dissemination of “femicide” that applies to a “very specific socio-political context” (983). This reading of feminicide contrasts with the one already offered by Bejarano and Fregoso, and it waters down the knowledge production of LAC scholars (García-Del Moral 2018, 940), treating this knowledge as having little usefulness for thinking about other contexts such as Europe. In the words of Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui: “The legitimate word belongs to those above, those below provide the materials. The same as in every system of knowledge, we provide raw material, and they give an elaborated product back to us” (cited in Grosfoguel 2016, 134). Rivera Cusicanqui is referring to the well-known practice in which the North takes the knowledge and experiences of the South to produce validated theories, while theories produced by the global South commonly remain in the

---

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.fpce.up.pt/ciie/?q=en/content/ac%C3%A7%C3%A3o-cost-is1206-femicide-across-europe-1>.

margins. Such a dynamic is visible in the reading of “femicide” proposed in the above article.

In the initiative’s report, group members Magdalena Grzyb, Marceline Naudi, and Chaime Marcuello-Servós (2018) list a series of experts they invited to converse with them before agreeing on a working definition of “femicide”; no experts from LAC are listed. After analyzing several definitions, the authors come to the same conclusion as others such as Russell, Laporta, and Segato: even if researchers do not agree on a single definition, a starting point is needed from which to work. The authors call for the need to “reclaim” the “original” political definition by Russell: “a woman is killed because of her gender” (28). Unlike EIGE, the authors agree on the need to work with a broad definition of femicide that includes different types, not only intimate cases.

Although this group’s work is necessary and relevant in the European context, the project coordinator makes a problematic claim: “While Europe had lagged behind the US, Canada, South America and South Africa in research and the study of femicide, European scholars are now at the forefront of publications in the field” (Weil 2018, 2010). It is not a matter of competition over who publishes more. More publications on femi(ni)cide in Europe could mean, for example, that now the focus is changing or that there are more resources to dedicate to publishing academic articles. Activists and researchers in the global South continue to produce relevant research on the subject; the statement above shows a Eurocentric perspective that needs to be questioned and reproduces an Oedipal structure that needs to be avoided.

## National level

I will now turn to national case examples in which the concept and category of femi(ni)cide has been put into play in Europe. Due to space limitations, I will not go in depth in any of these cases, however, I want to offer a sense of how some countries in Europe are operationalizing this concept and category and highlight some of the challenges in this region.

In France, the feminist group *Osez le féminisme!* launched in November 2014 a campaign for the legal recognition of “femicide,” drawing on actions already taken in LAC and France’s ratification of the IC. The group used a broad definition of femicide: the killing of women because they are women.<sup>21</sup> Years later, the French National Assembly prepared a report (2020) regarding the recognition of the category of “femicide” in France. The report analyses some definitions and some problems concerning the implementation of femicide, and it concludes that femicide cannot be penalized due to the principle of formal equality in the French constitution. The final proposal in this report “deems that the term ‘femicide’ designates the murders of women because of their sex, in particular when they are committed by an intimate partner or ex-partner [...] [The National Assembly] hopes that the use of the term ‘femicide’ will be encouraged in France in order to recognize the specific and systemic nature of these crimes and thus better name these intolerable realities so as to better put an end to them.”

It is interesting that not only activists, but also governmental bodies are using “femicide” in French, encompassing the definition of “femicide” in it. On the other hand, even when I welcome the will to use the term “femicide” to name the problem, the report’s

---

<sup>21</sup> See <http://www.reconnaissonslefemicide.fr/>.

conclusion, can be contested with arguments regarding the non-neutrality of law: even when the aim is to achieve equality, the political and legal spheres must deal with the fact that existing structures of power create unequal situations for different actors in society; thus these very inequalities cannot be effectively addressed by measures that pretend to treat every person universally the same. Furthermore, other countries that have legally criminalized femi(ni)cide also have constitutions guided by the principle of equality.

A different turn occurred in the Spanish autonomous community of Navarra, which drawing on CEDAW and IC, introduced the Ley Foral 14/2015 to act against VAW, the first law anywhere in Europe that includes the category of “femicide,” defined as follows: “homicides committed in the context of partnership or ex-partnership, as well as other crimes that reveal that the basis of their violence is gender discrimination, understood as including murder linked to sexual violence, murder in the context of prostitution and trafficking in women, honour killings, infanticide of girls, and dowry deaths.”<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, bodies such as the General Council of the Judiciary have already used the word in several reports where they clarify that “femicide” is not included in Spanish legislation, but they state that they have used it since 2009 to report on figures of “intimate femicides” in Spain. They recognize that “femicide” has been already used by international organisms, such as in the “Cotton field” case, and understand both concepts complement each other despite having degrees of difference (Observatorio 2012).

An interesting leap in Spain was the establishment of *Geofeminicidio* in 2010: an online application for quantitative and qualitative documentation of “femicides” in Spain. It was developed by Graciela Atencio, an Argentinean journalist, who had previously work

---

<sup>22</sup> Ley Foral 14/2015, Apr. 10, 2015 [71] B.O.N. Article 3 (2c).

on femicide in Mexico. I believe this case illustrates the dynamic conversations that can be built across different regions. *Geofemicidio* is influenced by Monárrez database and uses a broad definition that includes discussions developed in LAC and early contributions from scholars such as Russell, Caputi, and Radford—this is visible, for example, in its use of femicide types. *Geofemicidio* has inspired similar projects in other countries such as Germany, Russia, and Uruguay.

Moving to Germany, the government had denied in 2014 the existence of “femicide” in the country, declaring that “[f]emicide (understood as the killing of women simply because of their gender and to which there is little or no state reaction) is not a phenomenon which can be found in Germany.”<sup>23</sup> The statement draws this conclusion based on the argument that the State investigates and judges all homicides; it seems to merge Lagarde’s definition of “femicide” with the word “femicide.” Legally speaking, if a State does not recognize the problem of femi(ni)cide and does not have laws that oblige it to act with due diligence in such situations, that State is acting according to its homicide law; but this is a vicious trap. Here the German drafters have used the part of Lagarde’s definition that refers to the lack of State responsibility found in the Mexican context to avoid reckoning with the part that addresses women being killed due to being identified as women and the argument that it is not enough for a State to have laws to penalize homicides, it is negligent too if it does not recognize the problem, and create conditions that guarantee the right of women to a life free

---

<sup>23</sup> This statement came at the request of the General Assembly resolution 68/191 to provide information regarding gender-related killing of women (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014, *Statement by Germany on the investigation and prosecution of gender-related killings of women and girls*. [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/IEGM\\_GRK\\_BKK/Germany\\_Annex.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/IEGM_GRK_BKK/Germany_Annex.pdf)).

of violence. But, since 2018, the political discussion in Germany has started to change (see Luján-Pinelo, forthcoming Oct. 2022), and in 2022 a draft law on femi(ni)cide is being prepared and discussed; it will be interesting to see in what terms this law is elaborated.

Femi(ni)cide as a concept and category has not yet found its place in legal structures in Europe beyond the Spanish community of Navarra. However, it is gaining more visibility in the political sphere. I welcome the proposals to address intimate femi(ni)cide, but I do question the reduction of femi(ni)cide, and its corresponding strategies, to it (see Neumann, 2022). In these national cases, I do not delve into showing the entangled relationship between activism, academia, and politics in the making of femi(ni)cide an issue in the region; however, this relationship exists and should be studied. Europe is still a long way from agreeing on how to fight against femi(ni)cide in its complexity; however, there is hope that discussions will continue to develop, and that concrete and comprehensive strategies will emerge: for this to happen, other regions' experience and expertise will be essential.

## **Conclusion**

This cartography offers some answers to questions presented at the outset, such as whether or not femicide and feminicide are the same, the rationale behind deploying the paradigm of femi(ni)cide, how the concept of femi(ni)cide has emerged in different contexts, and how the category has entered legal arenas or not. It highlights the importance of first understanding the various ways in which the concept femi(ni)cide has been formulated; from there one can evaluate its transition to a legal category and analyze and criticize its landing in the terrain of jurisprudence. Naming femi(ni)cide will not single-handedly solve the killing of women, but it helps to articulate experiences that can contribute to activism, policy making, theory,

and, ultimately, concrete change; almost thirty years after its emergence, it is time for femi(ni)cide to find its explicit place within the scope of VAW.

I have argued that there are colonial practices that continue to be reproduced in the study of femi(ni)cide and need to be avoided. One example is the idea that femicide is the “universal” and original concept, while feminicide is the local, specific concept. Pablo González Casanova has described this way of thinking as follows:

Certain categories have appeared and have been treated in relation to the internal problems of a nation or territory, and others in relation to international problems, without systematically fixing points of interconnection; that is, without sufficiently investigating up to what point the categories generally used to explain internal problems also serve to explain international problems and vice versa. (1965, 27)

The global North needs to have the capacity to learn from the global South and engage in conversations that take its knowledge production seriously. *Feminicide* is not the Spanish translation of *femicide*; either is *femicide* the only “correct” term in English. I hope readers can glimpse the dynamics at play in the choice of one term or the other. I believe we must avoid narratives that perpetuate Oedipal structures, the trap of treating one single perspective as valid; instead, we must establish informed and engaged dialogues. This is the spirit in which I have proposed the framing “femi(ni)cide,” which allows multiple terms and interpretations to coexist.

Complex problems must be addressed in creative and complex ways; therefore, I have proposed studying the development and use of the concept of femi(ni)cide using the lens of intra-action. This allows us to work from the understanding that the different “realms”— for

example, activism, academia, politics and law—co-emerge relationally in the concept of femi(ni)cide, implying that the work done in one realm inherently affects the others. Strategies cannot be designed based on distinct disciplines such as the sociological, the legal or the political; for example, if we advocate for criminalizing femi(ni)cide, that does not mean this is the only solution or that all people promoting this strategy consider it the end goal.

I am not arguing that there is only one single dialogue between the global South and the global North, a unidirectional one in which coloniality is in effect; the reality is more complex. But it cannot be denied that this colonial dynamic is occurring in some readings and contributions. Neither am I diminishing the important contribution of scholars based in the global North—that would be to fall into the trap of Oedipal narratives. The diversity of dialogues and relationships are found, for example, in the cases of Spain and France, where the conversations with LAC actors have been more dynamic. Coloniality is not a process that occurs unidirectionally, internal colonialism also occurs within the global South and in the global North: one can find arguments that stigmatize marginalized communities, such as indigenous, Black, and migrant peoples in any of these regions.

In this new era in which femi(ni)cide is starting to find an arena in Europe and on a global scale, informed by the experience in LAC, we must be attentive to how feminist and non-feminist researchers give an account of the phenomenon. How we tell narratives matters, because they shape realities and have a real impact on people's lives. Above all, I hope my writing here will inspire more informed stories and non-colonizing research on the subject. Engaged conversations, deep learning, translations, and collaboration are key too. There is still an ocean of stories to tell; this is one of many.

## References

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. 2009. "The Danger of a Single Story." TED talk. July.  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story).
- Barad, Karen. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- . 2012. "Nature's Queer Performativity." *Kvinder, Køn of forskning / Women, Gender and Research* 1–2: 25-53.
- Braidotti, Rosi. 2002. *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- . 2011. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chejter, Silvia. 2008. *Femicidio: Desafíos teóricos y perfiles estadísticos*. Buenos Aires: CECYM.Corradi,
- Consuelo, Chaime Marcuello-Servós, Santiago Boira, and Shalva Weil. 2016. "Theories of Femicide and their Significance for Social Research." *Current Sociology* 64 (7): 975-995.
- Daza Bonachela, María del Mar. 2017. "Femicide in the Context of the Istanbul Convention." In *Femicides and Other Murders of Women in Spain: Annual Report 2015*, edited by Graciela Atencio, 53-76. Vienna: Special UN Edition–ACUNS.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 1994. *What Is Philosophy?* New York: Columbia University Press.
- Deus, Alicia, and Diana Gonzalez. 2018. *Analysis of Femicide/Feminicide Legislation in Latin America and the Caribbean and a Proposal for a Model Law*. Panama: UNWOMEN.
- EIGE (European Institute for Gender Equality). 2017. *Terminology and Indicators for Data Collection: Rape, Femicide and Intimate Partner Violence*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
- . 2021. *EIGE's Indicators on Intimate Partner Violence, Rape and Femicide: Recommendations to Improve Data Quality, Availability and Comparability*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
- Explanatory Report to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Istanbul, 11.V.2011
- Fregoso, Rosa-Linda, and Cynthia Bejarano. 2010. "Introduction: A Cartography of Feminicide in the Americas." In *Terrorizing Women: Feminicide in the Americas*, edited by Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, 1-42. Durham: Duke University Press.

- García-Del Moral, Paulina. 2018. "The Murders of Indigenous Women in Canada as Femicides: Toward a Decolonial Intersectional Reconceptualization of Femicide." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 43 (4): 929-54.
- González Casanova, Pablo. 1965. "Internal Colonialism and National Development." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 1 (4): 27-37.
- Grosfoguel, Ramón. 2016. "Del 'extractivismo económico' al 'extractivismo epistémico' y 'extractivismo ontológico.'" *Tabula Rasa* 24: 123-43.
- Grzyb, Magdalena, Marceline Naudi, and Chaime Marcuello-Servós. 2018. "Femicide Definitions." In *Femicide across Europe*, edited by Shalva Weil, Marceline Naudi, and Consuelo Corradi, 17-31. Bristol: Policy Press.
- hooks, bell. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Jagger, Gill. 2015. "New Materialism and Sexual Difference." *Signs* 40 (2): 321-42.
- Lagarde, Marcela. 1998. "Identidad de género y derechos humanos: La construcción de las humanas." In *Estudios básicos de derechos humanos IV*, edited by Laura Guzmán Stein and Gilda Pacheco Oreamuno. San José: Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos.
- . 2008. "Antropología, feminismo y política: Violencia feminicida y derechos humanos de las mujeres." In: *Retos teóricos y nuevas prácticas*, edited by Margaret Bullen and Carmen Díez Mintegui, 209-39. Donostia: Ankulegi Antropologia Elkartea.
- Laporta, Elena. 2015a. "Evolución del concepto: Un anglicismo que se desarrolló en América Latina." In *Feminicidio: De la categoría político-jurídica a la justicia universal*, edited by Graciela Atencio, 63-87. Madrid: CATARATA.
- . 2015b. "El feminicidio como categoría jurídica: De la regulación en América Latina a su inclusión en España." In *Feminicidio: De la categoría político-jurídica a la justicia universal*, edited by Graciela Atencio, 163-93. Madrid: CATARATA.
- Lugones, María. 2010. "Toward a Decolonial Feminism." *Hypatia* 25 (4): 742-59.
- Luján Pinelo, Aleida. 2018. "A Theoretical Approach to the Concept of Femi(ni)cide." *Philosophical Journal of Conflict and Violence* 2 (1): 40–63.
- . 2022. "On Extreme Forms of Violence Against Women in Europe – Does Femi(ni)cide Exist

- in Germany?" In *Gender Competent Public Law and Policies*, Gender Perspectives in Law 2, edited by Marko Davinić and Svetislav Kostić, 109-129. Cham: Springer.
- Maldonado-Torres, Nelson. 2007. "On the Coloniality of Being." *Cultural Studies* 21 (2-3): 240-70.
- Messuti, Ana. 2015. "La dimensión jurídica internacional del feminicidio." In *Feminicidio: De la categoría político-jurídica a la justicia universal*, edited by Graciela Atencio, 37-61. Madrid: CATARATA.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2005. *The Idea of Latin America*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Monárrez, Julia. 2009. *Trama de una injusticia: Feminicidio sexual sistémico en Ciudad Juárez*. Tijuana-Mexico City: Colegio de la Frontera Norte / Porrúa.
- . 2010a. "Ciudad Juárez: Moderna necrópolis." Interview by Graciela Atencio, *Feminicidio.net*, December 21. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrv04d3pD0I>.
- . 2010b. "The Victims of the Ciudad Juárez Feminicide." In *Terrorizing Women: Femicide in the Americas*, edited by Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, 59-69. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Montoya, Celeste, and Lise Rolandsen Agustín. 2013. "The Othering of Domestic Violence: The EU and Cultural Framings of Violence against Women." *Social Politics* 20 (4): 534-57.
- Neumann, Pamela. 2022. "'If It's Not Femicide, It's Still Murder': Contestations Over Femicide in Nicaragua." *Feminist Criminology* 17 (1): 139-59.
- Niemi, Johanna, and Amalia Verdu Sanmartin. 2020. "The Concepts of Gender and Violence in the Istanbul Convention." In *International Law and Violence Against Women: Europe and the Istanbul Convention*, edited by Johanna Niemi, Lourdes Peroni, and Vladislava Stoyanova, 77-94. London: Routledge.
- OAS (Organization of American States). 1994. Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women ("Convention of Belem do Para").
- PACE (Council of Europe: Parliamentary Assembly). *Femicides*. Report 11781 (2008).
- . *Disappearance and murder of a great number of women and girls in Mexico*. Resolution 1454 (2005).
- Pola, Susi. 2008. *Femi(ni)cidio en República Dominicana 2000–2006*. San José: CEFEMINA.
- Quijano, Aníbal. 1992. "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad." *Perú Indígena* 13 (29): 11-20.
- . 2000. "Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America." *International Sociology* 15 (2): 215-32.

- Radford, Jill. 1992. "Introduction." In *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, edited by Jill Radford and Diana Russell, 3-12. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Radford, Jill, and Diana Russell. 1992. "Preface." In *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, edited by Jill Radford and Diana Russell, xi-xv. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. 2015. *Sociología de la imagen: Ensayos*. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón.
- Russell, Diana. 2001. "Defining Femicide and Related Concepts." In *Femicide in Global Perspective*, edited by Diana Russell and Roberta Harmes, 12-25. New York: Teachers College Press.
- . 2011. "The Origin & Importance of the Term Femicide." Diana E. H. Russell, Ph.D. (website). [https://www.dianarussell.com/origin\\_of\\_femicide.html](https://www.dianarussell.com/origin_of_femicide.html).
- Russell, Diana, and Jane Caputi. 1990. "Femicide: Speaking the Unspeakable." *Ms Magazine* 1 (2): 34-37.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2016. "Epistemologies of the South and the Future." *From the European South* 1: 17-29.
- . 2018. *The End of the Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Schmidt Camacho, Alicia. 2004. "Body Counts on the Mexico-U.S. Border: Femicidio, Reification, and the Theft of Mexican Subjectivity." *Chicana/Latina Studies* 4 (1): 22-60.
- Segato, Rita Laura. 2011a. "Femigenocidio y feminicidio: Una propuesta de tipificación." Lecture given at the II Encuentro Mesoamericano de Estudios de Género y Feminismos, Guatemala City, May 4-6. <http://mujeresdeguatemala.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Femigenocidio-y-Feminicidio.pdf>.
- . 2011b. "Femi-geno-cidio como crimen en el fuero internacional de los Derechos Humanos: El derecho a nombrar el sufrimiento en el derecho." In *Feminicidio en América Latina*, edited by Rosa-Linda Fregoso and Cynthia Bejarano, 249-77. Mexico City: CEIICH- UNAM.
- Smart, Carol. 1989. *Feminism and the Power of Law*. London: Routledge.
- Spinelli, Barbara. 2011. *Femicide and Femicide in Europe: Gender-Motivated Killings of Women as a Result of Intimate Partner Violence*. Expert paper. New York: UN Expert Group Meeting on Gender-Motivated Killings of Women.
- . 2013. "The Increase in Femicide and its Political Invisibility." In *Feminicide: A Global*

- Phenomenon. From Madrid to Santiago*, edited by Jiménez, Patricia, Katherine Ronderos, Carlos Mascarell Vilar, and Patsilí Toledo, 34-8. Brussels: Heinrich Böll Stiftung–European Union.
- Toledo Vásquez, Patsilí. 2009. *Feminicidio*. Mexico City: Oficina en México del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos.
- . 2012. “La tipificación del femicidio/feminicidio en países latinoamericanos: Antecedentes y primeras sentencias (1999–2012).” MA thesis, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.
- van der Tuin, Iris. 2009. “Jumping Generations.” *Australian Feminist Studies* 24 (54): 17-31.
- Weil, Shalva. 2018. “Research and Prevention of Femicide across Europe.” In *Femicide across Europe*, edited by Shalva Weil, Marceline Naudi, and Consuelo Corradi, 1-15. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Wright, Melissa W. 2011. “Necropolitics, Narcopolitics, and Femicide: Gendered Violence on the Mexico-U.S. Border.” *Signs* 36 (3): 707-31.